

## Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 SP-02 PRS-01 INR-05 SAM-01 DODE-00

CIAE-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 RSC-01 /038 W

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FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1493

INFO USIA WASHDC

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 LISBON 0370

LIMDIS

DEPT PASS DIA; USIA FOR IOR/MOCERI AND IWE/GILDNER

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT PINR SOPN PO

SUBJ: POLLS SHOW SCANT ELECTORAL SUPPORT FOR PCP

REF: USIA 24062

SUMMARY: PUBLIC OPINION POLL COMMISSIONED THREE WEEKS AGO FOR ARMED FORCES MOVEMENT REVEALS 10 PERCENT OF POPULATION HAVE DECLARED FOR PCP AND MDP/CDE IN UPCOMING ELECTIONS WITH 50 PERCENT STILL UNDECIDED. DIFFERENT POLL CONDUCTED FOR PPD LAST SEPT SHOWED 3.4 PERCENT VOTE FOR COMMUNISTS. THIS LATTER POLL REVEALED GENERAL LACK OF POLITICAL KNOWLEDGE AMONG POPULACE: 52 PERCENT BEING UNABLE TO NAME ANY POLITICAL PARTY, AND 66 PERCENT UNABLE TO SPECIFY WHAT KIND OF POLITICAL SYSTEM THEY FAVORED. IN CONTRAST TO LACK OF KNOWLEDGE ABOUT PARTIES AND THEIR PROGRAMS, GREAT BULK OF POPULATION APPEAR KNOWLEDGEABLE REGARDING SUCH PERSONALITIES AS SPINOLA, SOARES AND CUNHAL. END SUMMARY.

1. EMBASSY HAS OBTAINED RESULTS OF TWO CONFIDENTIAL PUBLIC OPINION POLLS REGARDING VOTING PLANS AND POLITICAL BELIEFS OF REPRESENTATIVE SAMPLES OF PORTUGUESE VOTING POPULATION. RESULTS OF MOST RECENT POLL, CONDUCTED ABOUT A MONTH AGO FOR ARMED FORCES MOVEMENT, SHOW THAT THE 7000 PERSONS SAMPLED PLAN TO

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VOTE AS FOLLOWS IN NEXT ELECTION:

UNDECIDED 50 PERCENT  
SOCIALISTS 20 PERCENT  
PPD 10 PERCENT  
PCP AND MDP 10 PERCENT  
CDS 5 PERCENT  
FAR LEFT 5 PERCENT

2. EMBASSY HAS ALSO SEEN COPY OF CONFIDENTIAL OPINION SURVEY CONDUCTED BY PRIVATE, POLITICALLY INDEPENDENT POLLING ORGANIZATION AT BEHEST OF POLULAR DEMOCRATIC PARTY (PPD) DURING FIRST TWO WEEKS OF SEPTEMBER 1974. (FACT THAT EMBASSY HAS ACCESS TO THIS INFORMATION SHOULD BE TREATED CAREFULLY IN ORDER NOT TO JEOPARDIZE OUR ACCESS TO POSSIBLY BEST SOURCE IN COUNTRY FOR QUANTITATIVE POLITICAL DATA. EXACT FIGURES FROM THIS POLL SHOULD NOT BE REPEATED OR QUOTED).

3. POLL IS SAMPLING OF POLITICAL KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEFS OF 4000 PERSONS IN 360 LOCALITIES IN CONTINENTAL PORTUGAL. THOSE CONDUCTING SURVEY WERE MAINLY STUDENTS. RESPONDENTS WERE ASKED TO PROVIDE ANSWERS TO AN ELABORATE 6-PAGE QUESTIONNAIRE. POLLING DIRECTOR TOLD EMBOFF THAT THREE CAVEATS SHOULD BE BORNE IN MIND IN ANALYSIS OF SURVEY RESULTS: AVERAGE PORTUGUESE UNFAMILIAR WITH POLLSTERS AND SUSPICIOUS OF USES TO WHICH POLL WOULD BE PUT; POLLSTERS MAINLY STUDENTS AND THUS MAY HAVE LED RESPONDENTS TO TELL INTERVIEWERS WHAT THEY WANTED TO HEAR, I.E., THAT THEY WOULD VOTE LEFTIST (HENCE RESULTS MAY BE SOMEWHAT SKEWED TO LEFT); SLIM CHANCE EXISTS THAT SOME STUDENTS MAY HAVE DOCTORED ANSWERS TO SOME QUESTIONS TO REFLECT FAVORABLY ON THEIR PREFERRED PARTY, WHICH WOULD ALSO MOST LIKELY REBOUND TO BENEFIT OF LEFT.

4. IN GENERAL, POLL RESULTS CONFIRMED WIDESPREAD OPINION THAT BULK OF POPULATION UNINFORMED ABOUT POLITICS. 52 PERCENT WERE UNABLE TO NAME ANY POLITICAL PARTY AT ALL. KNOWLEDGE OF PARTIES INCREASED DIRECTLY IN PROPORTION TO EDUCATION OF RESPONDENTS AND WITH SIZE OF PLACE OF RESIDENCE; DECREASED WITH AGE. FEMALES MUCH MORE UNINFORMED THAN MALES ABOUT POLITICAL PARTIES.

5. ALL PARTIES APPEARED TO HAVE RECOGNITION PROBLEM AT TIME  
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OF SURVEY. MOST KNOWN (AT 39 PERCENT EACH) WERE SOCIALISTS (PS) AND COMMUNISTS (PCP). PPD KNOWN BY ONLY 19 PERCENT. REGARDLESS OF VARIABLE CONSIDERED, (OCCUPATION, AGE, SEX, EDUCATION, PLACE OF RESIDENCE) PPD LESS WELL KNOWN THAN PCP OR PS. KNOWLEDGE OF OTHER PARTIES ALMOST NONEXISTENT AT TIME OF SURVEY

6. RESPONDENTS WERE ASKED WHICH PARTY THEY WOULD VOTE FOR IF

ELECTIONS WERE HELD NEXT DAY. RESULTS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

UNDECIDED 69 PERCENT  
SOCIALISTS 10.5 PERCENT  
PPD 3.9 PERCENT  
PCP 3.4 PERCENT  
SPINOLA'S  
PARTY (SIC) 1.3 PERCENT

7. SAME QUESTION WAS ASKED TO THOSE PERSONS WHO WERE ABLE TO  
NAME POLITICAL PARTY, WITH FOLLOWING RESULTS:

SOCIALISTS 25 PERCENT  
PPD 18 PERCENT  
PCP 9 PERCENT  
OVERWHELMING MAJORITY --84 PERCENT--COULD NOT SAY WHETHER OR  
NOT MARXIST PARTY EXISTED IN PORTUGAL.

8. FEW PERSONS KNEW WHAT POLITICAL SYSTEM THEY WANTED.  
ASKED TO CHOOSE BETWEEN SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC, MARXIST, OR  
SOCIALIST SYSTEM, RESPONSE WAS AS FOLLOWS:

DON'T KNOW 66 PERCENT  
SOCIALIST 14 PERCENT  
SOCIAL  
DEMOCRATIC 12 PERCENT  
MARXIST 2 PERCENT

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FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

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S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 LISBON 0370

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9. VERY FEW RESPONDENTS WERE ABLE TO TELL ONE PARTY FROM ANOTHER: 77 PERCENT COULD NOT SPECIFY DIFFERENCE BETWEEN PS AND PCP; 86 PERCENT COULD NOT DIFFERENTIATE IN ANY WAY BETWEEN PS AND PPD; AND 85 PERCENT COULD NOT SPECIFY HOW PCP DIFFERED FROM PPD.

10. MAJORITY OF THOSE SURVEYED HAD LITTLE CONFIDENCE IN ABILITY OF ANY PARTY TO SOLVE EITHER THEIR PERSONAL PROBLEMS OR NATION'S. ALTHOUGH 48 PERCENT COULD NAME A PARTY, ONLY 25 PERCENT HAD CONFIDENCE THAT ANY PARTY COULD SOLVE PROBLEMS CONFRONTING NATION.

11. WHILE RESPONDENTS GENERALLY KNEW LITTLE ABOUT SPECIFIC PARTIES, 65 PERCENT WERE ABLE TO PROVIDE NAME OF A CURRENT POLITICAL PERSONALITY. THE MOST WELL KNOWN PERSONALITIES WERE:

(THEN-PRESIDENT) SPINOLA	89 PERCENT
MARIO SOARES	54 PERCENT
ALVARO CUNHAL	36 PERCENT
PRIME MINISTER GONCALVES	16 PERCENT
COSTA GOMES	10 PERCENT
SA CARNEIRO	9 PERCENT

12. MOST OF RESPONDENTS WERE POLITICALLY INACTIVE. 90 PERCENT HAD NEVER ATTENDED POLITICAL RALLY OR MEETING. 83 PERCENT OF  
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THOSE WHO HAD WERE MEN, THE MAJORITY UNDER AGE 34.

13. FULL REPORT ON POLLS FOLLOWS BY AIRGRAM.

14. COMMENT: DIRECTOR OF SEPTEMBER POLL HAS ASSURED EMBOFF THAT RESULTS ARE STATISTICALLY VALID. IF ANYTHING, BECAUSE OF BIASES REFERRED TO EARLIER, RESULTS OF SEPT 1974 POLL OVEREMPHASIZE SUPPORT FOR POLITICAL LEFT. BOTH THIS SURVEY AND MORE RECENT ONE SHOW THAT MAJORITY OF PORTUGUESE HAVE NOT YET DECIDED HOW THEY WILL VOTE, ALTHOUGH MORE ARE DECIDED NOW THAN IN SEPTEMBER. LOW PROJECTED VOTE FOR COMMUNIST PARTY (AND MDP), AND GENERAL LACK OF INTEREST IN POLITICS WHICH SEPTEMBER POLL REVEALS, NOT SURPRISING AFTER SO MANY DECADES IN WHICH AUTHORITARIAN REGIME DISCOURAGED INTEREST AND PARTICIPATION IN POLITICS.

15. WE BELIEVE COMMUNIST PARTY AWARE OF WHAT THESE TWO POLLS REVEAL. RESULTS HAVE UNDOUBTEDLY ADDED TO ALREADY SERIOUS CONCERN WITHIN PCP OVER ITS ELECTORAL PROSPECTS AND LED TO RECENT EFFORTS BY PCP TO PROBE POSSIBILITIES FOR POSTPONING ELECTIONS.

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